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Academic Senate Minutes - March 23, 2001

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

DAYTON, OHIO

MINUTES OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

March 23, 2001 - KU 310, 3:00 pm

Presiding: Betty Youngkin

Senators Present: Bartlett, Bartley, Castellano, Conniff, Cox, Crum, Dandaneau, DeConnick, Doyle, Dunne, Eimermacher, Erdei, Galioto, Geiger, Gerla, Gould, Hall, Hary, Kearns, Korte, Lechleiter, Massucci, McKenna, Morman, Saliba, Staubach, Youngkin, Yungblut

Guest: Dowdall, Mize, Rismiller, Walker

1. Opening Prayer: The meeting opened with a reading by Senator Gould.

2. Roll Call: Twenty-eight of thirty-seven senators were present.

3. Approval of the Minutes: The minutes were approved with a spelling correction and an Academic Senate assignment correction.

4. Alternative Grading System – I-00-16 – Senate document No. 01-02.

A proposal to add A-, B+, B-, and C+ to the undergraduate option 1 grading system, and A- and B+ to the graduate grading system was presented by the Student Academic Policies Committee. In addition to the data and rationale presented with the proposal, three additional items were pointed out. First, Legal Affairs was contacted about the legality of changing the grading system for students who were already enrolled. They responded that it would be covered under the general policy that the "university reserves the right to" Second, the chair of the Scholarship Committee was asked about the impact of the grade change on students losing their scholarship. He responded that it would not be a problem. Third, the English, Communication and Mathematics departments were contacted about the

administrative impact of a C- grade in a competency course. They did not respond.

The floor was opened to debate on the proposal.

An amendment to add a C- to the proposed undergraduate system was offered, with the condition that the Academic Senate must explicitly address the retake policy and competency program before the C- takes effect. The following comments were made.

1. The English department is against the C-.
2. A C- is a necessary grade between a C and a D.
3. We already have two less than satisfactory grades below a C (D and F). We don't need a third.
4. A C- would be considered not minimally acceptable, but it is not poor. The GPA penalty is not as severe.
5. There is too big of a drop between C and D.
6. Why do we need extra grades at the low end?
7. A D sends a better message than a C-.
8. C- entangles the competency program.
9. One goal would be to achieve fairness by showing less than acceptable work with a C-.
10. The majority of the chairs in the College support the C- grade.
11. No faculty member is required to give a C- grade.

A vote was taken on the amendment to add a C- to the proposed undergraduate option 1 grading system.

For: 16 Against: 9 Abstain: 0

The amendment passed.

An amendment to add a B- to the proposed graduate system was offered.

The following comments were made.

1. The faculty have not had enough time to consider the proposed graduate system change. It was noted that all faculty were sent the proposal several weeks ago. Furthermore, the Graduate Council was strongly in favor of adding +/- grades.

2. The question was asked if the university would allow students to receive a graduate degree with less than a 3.0000. The answer is NO.

A vote was taken on the amendment to add a B- to the proposed graduate system.

For: 13 Against: 10 Abstain: 2

The amendment passed.

A motion was made to separate the proposed undergraduate system from the proposed graduate system. A vote was taken.

For: 19 Against: 3 Abstain: 3

The motion passed.

Comments were presented on the proposed undergraduate system.

1. A question was asked if students have the right to ask for a B+ if they have the "points." The question was answered as follows. University regulations require instructors to communicate their grading system at the beginning of the term. Instructors are expected to follow the university grading system, but they do not have to give any particular grade.

2. It is a concern that instructors use different numerical scales to determine a letter grade.

3. Must faculty adhere to the new standard? Yes, but only after the retake policy and competency program have been re-examined. Instructors do not have to use all of the grades available.

4. The proposed system puts extra emphasis on the GPA. We should be more concerned with the whole person.

5. There will be extra pressure placed on students. They will spend more

time studying and less time on service.

6. Only a minority of the faculty responded to the survey, so can we legally do this? Would this be analogous to needing at least one-half of the faculty to vote on a constitutional amendment? NO. The Academic Senate has legislative authority on this issue.

7. Can we do this measurement more precisely than we do now?

8. The proposed system will hurt "A" students.

A motion was made to call the question.

For: 13 Against: 10 Abstain: 1

The question is called.

The vote on the proposed undergraduate option 1 grading system with a C- included was taken.

For: 15 Against: 11 Abstain: 0

The proposal passed.

Comments regarding the proposed change to the graduate grading system were solicited. The question was called.

For: 13 Against: 11 Abstain: 2

The question is called.

The vote on the proposed graduate grading system with a B- included was taken.

For: 13 Against: 10 Abstain: 3

The proposal passed.

5. Announcements

It was pointed out that the faculty would soon be asked to vote on two amendments to the Constitution of the Academic Senate. All senators are urged to encourage their constituency to vote.

6. A Discussion with the Presidential Search Consultant

Senator Geiger introduced Dr Jean Dowdall to the Academic Senate, citing her many credentials. Dr Dowdall was asked to make a few introductory comments.

Dr Dowdall explained that although there will be a good amount of advertising, she will recruit extensively. It is likely that she will approach people who do not know what UD is, and do not have an immediate interest in us. Due to this type of approach there will be a high level of confidentiality maintained until the individual is committed to visiting the campus. A document, previously distributed to the Academic Senate, will be used to attract potential candidates. The Senate was asked to comment on the document.

The Student Academic Policy Committee responded with the following remarks.

- a. The university should have a president who lives by the motto: learn, lead, and serve.
- b. The new president must understand that we are a community, and s/he must be part of that community.
- c. The new president must be open-minded and committed to student issues.
- d. The new president must have the ability to gain student support, must be experienced and comfortable with young adults, and must keep a close connection with students.
- e. The new president should have an on-campus presence.
- f. The presidential candidates should have an open forum with students.

It was suggested that the following questions could be asked of the presidential candidates.

- 1. How would you maintain contact with the students?
- 2. What are your expectations in dividing your time between on-campus and off-campus activities?
- 3. What are your thoughts on student diversity? Does it need to be

increased, and how would you do it?

The Academic Policies Committee recommended the following presidential qualifications.

1. The new president needs significant academic experience, including both undergraduate and graduate teaching, academic research, curriculum development, and administration.
2. S/he should understand UD's educational programs such as general education and an integrative curriculum.

The following discussions should take place.

1. Interact with faculty groups such as the Executive Committee of the Academic Senate, General Education Committee, or AAC of the College.
2. What is the candidate's view on tenure?
3. What is the candidate's view on the composition of instructional staff, workload policies, and compensation policies?
4. What are the views of the candidate on the complementary roles of undergraduate and graduate education?

Dr Dowdall's response to the SAPC comments was that the new president must be a significant fundraiser. S/he might find it hard to be on campus. The SAPC counter-responded that there are many other administrators who do fundraising.

Dr Dowdall's response to the APC was that the new president will not be the chief academic officer, and will not likely be as involved with faculty and academic issues as the faculty might like.

The Faculty Affairs Committee offered the following questions.

1. How will the candidate impact the Catholic/Marianist identity?
2. How will academic standards be impacted?
3. What will be the ratio of time spent on- and off-campus?
4. Where does the candidate see the university in relation to other

universities?

Comments were taken from the floor

1. The written qualifications do not require the new president to interact with faculty or students.
2. An AAUP representative stated that the new president must endorse academic freedom, and specifically address the impact of Ex Corde Ecclesiae.
3. Concern was expressed that the new president would be from a corporate background. Dr Dowdall commented that the search committee will look widely, but will probably end up with an academic person.
4. A question was asked if there would be a good mix of religious background in the candidates. Dr Dowdall responded that there would likely be a mix, but stressed that Marianists will be heavily involved. Nevertheless, a layperson could be picked.
5. It was noted that students at UD demand a lot of the faculty and the president.
6. There is concern at the university that we are in a less than stable situation. It is troublesome that the provost is leaving, the chief financial officer has left, there is talk that some other high administrators may soon leave, and many faculty members are retiring.
7. It was again stated that the candidate should have a strong academic background. Dr Dowdall responded that the new president will have academic input, but will not dominate the academic scene.
8. It was noted that there are errors of fact in the Presidential Search Document. Also, the description of the College is not recognizable. It will be corrected.
9. It was expressed that we are putting too many demands on the presidential candidate.
10. We need an explicit written statement on academic freedom from the candidates.
11. Senators were asked to communicate to the search committee any names of individuals who might make a good candidate.

12. It is important that the new president be flexible enough to deal with fundraising, empower administrators, and interact with students.

13. It is important that divisions (especially deans) comment on the candidates.

14. The profile of the candidate should stress intellectual excellence.

15. A question was asked about the level to which references would be checked. Dr Dowdall responded that in the preliminary stages only the candidates' references would be checked. In later stages reference checks will be extended. In fact, the candidate will be asked to supply names of critics to his or her positions.

16. Dr Dowdall was asked about the depth and timing of her role in the search. She responded that she would be heavily involved until the candidates come to campus. At that point she will significantly reduce her presence in the process.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted: George R. Doyle, Jr., Secretary of the Academic Senate